

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Claim Amendment Summary

Claims pending

- Before this Amendment: Claims 1-18 and 20-22.
- After this Amendment: Claims 1-18 and 20-22.

Non-Elected, Canceled, or Withdrawn claims: None.

Amended claims: 1-4, 6-16, 18 and 20.

New claims: None.

Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method ~~[[for]]~~ of communicating object data requested by an instant messaging application executed on an instant messaging platform, the method comprising:

generating, at a client computing device running the instant messaging application, a unique hash value of a fixed length based on the object data, the object data representing a remote user in the instant messaging application and comprising wherein the object data includes metadata descriptive of the object data, [[and]] wherein the metadata comprises: includes

a hash field storing the generated hash value;

a location field storing a location identifier indicative of a location of the object data other than a location in a local cache of the client computing device; and

a type field indicating an object type which has been previously selected by ~~the remote user a user of a local computer~~ to uniquely represent the ~~remote~~ user during future sessions of ~~the~~ instant messaging application;

storing the object data at a storage location ~~in the local cache of the client computing device~~, wherein the ~~location of the object data in the local cache corresponds to the hash value~~ at the storage location is represented by an object name having the hash value and a location identifier identifying the storage location; and

returning ~~[[the]]~~ an object name of the object data to the instant messaging application, ~~the object name comprising having~~ the hash value and the location field and identifier identifying the storage location to the user, the object name enabling the user to access of the object data in the local cache by the instant messaging application without the object data being altered at the client computing device including the object type, such that the object type which has been selected by the user can be used to uniquely represent the user during the future sessions of instant messaging.

2. (Currently amended) A method as recited in claim 1 further comprising:

receiving a request for the object data ~~from the instant messaging application~~, the request including the object name; and

retrieving the object data from ~~[[a]]~~ the local cache of the computing device, wherein the object data is located based on the hash value in the object data.

3. **(Currently amended)** A method as recited in claim 1 further comprising:

receiving a request for the object data from the instant messaging application, the request including the object name; and

in response to receiving the request, retrieving the object data from the location using the location identifier.

4. **(Currently amended)** A method as recited in claim 1 further comprising:

receiving a request for the object data from the instant messaging application, the request including the object name; and

determining whether the requested object data is in [[a]] the local cache of the client computing device based on the hash value; and

if the requested object data is in the local cache, retrieving the object data from the local cache,

otherwise, retrieving the requested object data from the location identified by the location identifier.

5. **(Original)** A method as recited in claim 4 wherein the retrieving the requested object data from the location identified by the location identifier comprises:

retrieving the requested object data from network storage.

6. (Currently amended) A method as recited in claim 4 wherein the retrieving the requested object data from the location identified by the location identifier comprises:

retrieving the requested object data from a local file system within the local client computing device ~~computer~~.

7. (Currently amended) A method as recited in claim 4 wherein the retrieving the requested object data from the location identified by the location identifier comprises:

retrieving the requested object data from a remote file system remote of the client computing device.

8. (Currently amended) A method as recited in claim 7 wherein the retrieving the requested object data from the a-remote file system remote of the client computing device comprises:

accessing the ~~remote~~ file system via a peer-to-peer connection.

9. (Currently amended) A method as recited in claim 7 wherein the retrieving the requested object data from the a-remote file system remote of the client computing device comprises:

accessing the ~~remote~~ file system via a connection through a switchboard server.

10. (Currently amended) A computer-readable medium having stored thereon computer-executable instructions that, when executed by one or more processors in a client computer, configure the client computer to perform for performing a method comprising:

receiving, at the client computer, a name associated with a user on a remote computer from an instant messaging application executed on the client computer, the name comprising including location data and a hash value uniquely associated with a data object representing the user on the remote computer, the data object comprising metadata descriptive of the object data, wherein;

the hash value is generated to compute a condensed representation of the data object associated with the user on the remote computer;

the hash value identifies a location of the data object in a local cache of the client computer;

the location data in the name indicates a location of the data object other than the location in the local cache identified by the hash value; and

~~the data object includes metadata descriptive of the data object, and~~
wherein

the metadata ~~comprises; includes~~

a hash field storing the hash value;

a location field storing a location identifier indicative of the location data in the name; and

a type field indicating an object type which has been previously selected by the user to uniquely represent the user on the remote computer during future sessions of the instant messaging application; and

retrieving the data object associated with the name, the retrieving comprising:

determining whether the data object is in the local cache of the client computer based on the hash value; such that

in an event the object data is in the local cache, retrieving the object data from the local cache;

in an event the object data is not in the local cache, retrieving the object data from one of a local cache based on the hash value or a the location identified by the location data ,such that the object type which has been selected by the user can be used to uniquely represent the user during the future sessions of instant messaging.

11. (Currently amended) A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 10 wherein the retrieving the object data object from the one of a local cache based on the hash value or a location identified by the location data comprises:

retrieving the object data from the local cache based on the hash value

determining whether the data object is in a local cache based on the hash value;

and

if the data object is in the local cache, retrieving the data object from the local cache;

~~otherwise, retrieving the data object from the location identified by the location data.~~

12. (Currently amended) A computer-readable medium as recited in claim [[11]] 10 wherein the retrieving the data object from the location identified by the location data comprises retrieving the data object from a ~~remote~~ file system remote of the client computer.

13. (Currently amended) A computer-readable medium as recited in claim [[11]] 10 wherein the retrieving the data object from the location identified by the location data comprises retrieving the data object from a local file system of the client computer.

14. (Currently amended) A computer-readable medium as recited in claim [[11]] 10 wherein the retrieving the data object from the location identified by the location data comprises retrieving the data object from a network storage.

15. (Currently amended) A computer-readable medium as recited in claim [[11]] 10 wherein the retrieving the data object from the location identified by the location data comprises accessing a remote computer via a peer-to-peer connection.

16. (Currently amended) A system implemented at a client computer for managing a data object ~~objects~~ representing ~~users~~ a remote user on a remote client computer in an instant messaging conversation ~~between the client computer and the remote client computer~~, the system comprising:

one or more processors; and

memory coupled to the one or more processors, the memory thereon having instructions to implement;

[[a]] the data object representing the remote user on the client computer,
~~wherein the data object comprising includes~~ metadata descriptive of the data object, [[and]] wherein the metadata ~~comprises; includes~~

a hash field storing a hash value generated to identify a location in a local cache of the client computer in which the data object is to be stored;

a location field storing a location identifier indicative of a location in the remote client computer in which the data object has been stored;

a name field storing an object name comprising the hash value and the location identifier of the data object; and

a type field indicating an object type which has been previously selected by a user of a local ~~the remote user on the remote client~~ computer to uniquely represent the ~~remote~~ user during future sessions of the instant messaging conversation ~~, the data object having an object name including a location identifier and a hash value;~~ and

[[an]] a data object store operable to;

retrieve the data object from the remote client computer through
[[a]] the location identified by the location identifier; and
store the retrieved data object in [[a]] the local cache of the client
computer based on the hash value ~~such that the object type which has been~~
~~selected by the user can be used to uniquely represent the user during the~~
~~future sessions of instant messaging.~~

17. **(Original)** A system as recited in claim 16 wherein the object name further comprises a creator identifier identifying a creator of the data object.

18. **(Currently amended)** A system as recited in claim 16 further comprising a transport protocol stack enabling the object store to retrieve the data object from ~~a remote storage location~~ the remote client computer over a peer-to-peer connection between the client computer and the remote client computer.

19. **(Canceled)**

20. **(Currently amended)** A system as recited in claim [[19]] 16 wherein the metadata further comprises:
a friendly name field storing a friendly name of the data object; and

a second hash value based on the metadata comprising the hash value, the location identifier, the object name, the object type, the creator identifier, and the friendly name of the data object.

21. (Original) A system as recited in claim 16 wherein the location identifier comprises a uniform resource locator (URL).

22. (Original) A system as recited in claim 16 wherein the location identifier comprises a uniform resource identifier (URI).